



Food Protection and Defense Institute

A Homeland Security Center of Excellence

August 7, 2020

COVID-19 Near-Term Issues Spotting in Food Supply Chain

UPDATE #39

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Updates issued on Fridays



Action Opportunity Update

Critical path to prevent broader food system disruption

- Address increasing level of COVID-19 infections in food processing and farm level production facilities
 - Enhance COVID-related worker health and surveillance processes
 - Coordinate worker protective equipment to:
 - maintain worker safety with normal operation PPE;
 - maintain food safety with normal operation sanitation wear; and
 - enhance COVID-19 infection control measures
- Monitor food production and processing status to identify transition points and potential cascading effects
- Coordinate public health efforts to address community spread in vulnerable food processing and farm worker communities
- Monitor global impact of COVID-19 on food security as a potential precursor for civil unrest

Critical path to meat supply chain disruption resolution

- Maintain operating capacity at processing facilities in consideration of worker health
 - Implement weekend processing to enhance short-term capacity
 - Coordinate worker protective equipment to:
 - maintain worker safety with normal operation PPE (specific to each job function and may include, for example, cut-resistant clothing, bump caps, dust masks/respirators, protective eyewear, protective foot wear, etc.);
 - maintain food safety with normal operation sanitation wear (specific to each product produced and may include, for example, hair/beard nets, disposable gloves, cloth or disposable coats/gowns, shoe covers, etc.); and
 - enhance COVID-19 infection control measures through cloth-face coverings, social distancing, physical barriers, etc.
- Continue to manage overstock through processing capacity, husbandry practices, alternative slaughter options, rendering, composting, and burial as appropriate in each locality
- Support livestock producers and processors in achieving new equilibrium including financial and liability considerations



Situation Update

Action by Appointed and Elected Officials

- -

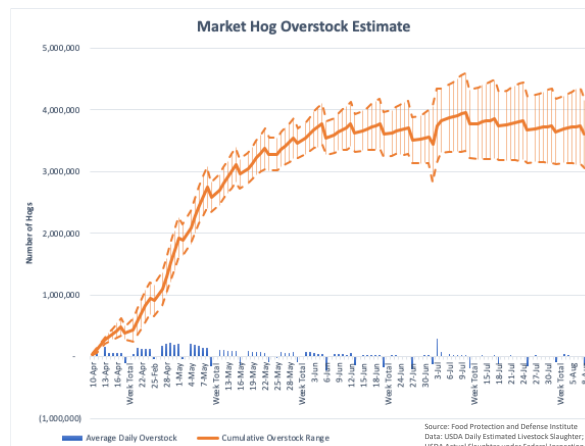
Hog Update

Daily Hog Slaughter and Overstock Addition

- Cumulative overstock estimate
 - 3.6MM, uncertainty 3.1-4.1 MM
 - similar to the previous week
 (USDA Daily Estimated Livestock Slaughter; USDA Actual Slaughter under Federal Inspection)

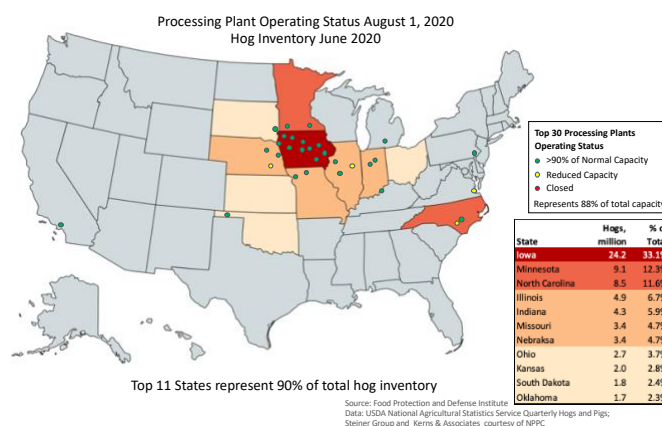
- Daily slaughter numbers

	Daily Estimate	Same day April 3-9	Year Ago
August 3	425,000	474,731	424,517
August 4	474,000	483,431	474,097
August 5	475,000	472,974	475,526
August 6	476,000	467,945	474,949
August 7	474,000	482,993	448,535
August 8	230,000	140,189	52,304



(USDA Daily Estimated Livestock Slaughter;
USDA Actual Slaughter under Federal Inspection)

- Daily pork processing capacity
 - Approximately 102% of pre-COVID capacity for the week ending August 8
 - Capacity reduction from maximal capacity approximately 5% on August 1 with 24 of 28 previously impacted plants functioning at over 90% normal capacity and 20 of these over 95% capacity. (USDA Daily Estimated Livestock Slaughter; Kern and Associates courtesy of NPPC)
 - Processing capacity for slaughter has shown stabilization at about 95% of maximal slaughter capacity since early July. However, it is important to note that slaughter capacity alone does not indicate that disruption in meat-packing is corrected. Each of these facilities also contain processing areas where carcasses are disassembled. This part of the facility is much more labor intensive and contains environment and working conditions optimal for COVID spread. Although public





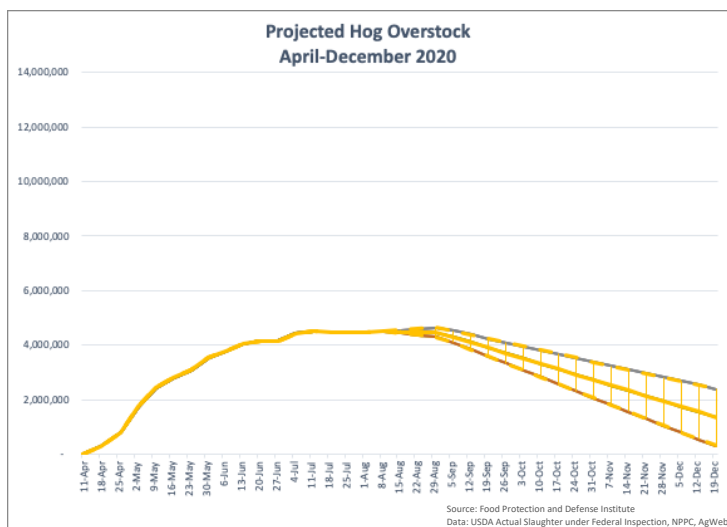
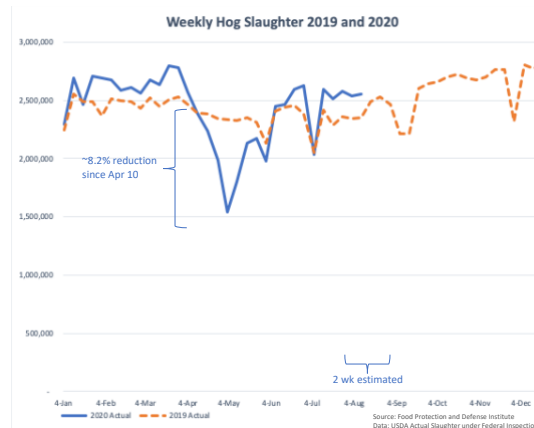
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metrics will show total pork volume is near 2019 levels, disruption in the carcass disassembly areas is still present through observational analysis based on visualization of pork availability and type of product currently appearing at retail. Data to support this observation is difficult to obtain as it is not reported publicly.

Weekly Hog Slaughter and Overstock Projections

- Weekly slaughter numbers for the week ending August 8 were slightly higher than pre-COVID levels with a 8% reduction to date starting from the week ending April 11. (USDA Daily Estimated Livestock Slaughter; USDA Actual Slaughter under Federal Inspection)
- Total hog overstock projections through December 2020 may be near peak at about 4.5MM market weight hogs due to continued accelerated recovery.
- There is uncertainty in the projections which demonstrate a leveling of cumulative overstock for the past 6 weeks of near 4.5 MM due to variability in farm level husbandry and culling practices.
- As reported in the Update #34 issued on July 3, 2020, cumulative overstock estimates are higher than actual current overstock inventory due to the confidentiality and sensitivity of depopulation and young stock culling at the farm level. In addition, rendering capacity and alternative supply chains contributed greatly to decreasing overstock levels with date for this contribution residing in the private sector.
- Using the June 2020 Quarterly Hogs and Pigs inventory, total current overstock is estimated at approximately 1.5MM animals.



Assumptions

- Hog inventory at 95% plant capacity through mid-October representing market conditions for pigs already born and in growth cycle prior to COVID-19
- Year on year capacity increase of 6.4% to April 9 excluded after Aug 31, 2020
- Adjusted for normal weekly fluctuation in plant capacity (e.g. holiday reductions)
- Average plant capacity
 - 90% by week of Jun 5
 - Normal capacity through remainder of year
- Young pig and sow culling (relative to Q1)
 - No culling prior to April 10
 - 5% for pigs reaching market weight in mid-September

(Date: August 7, 2020)



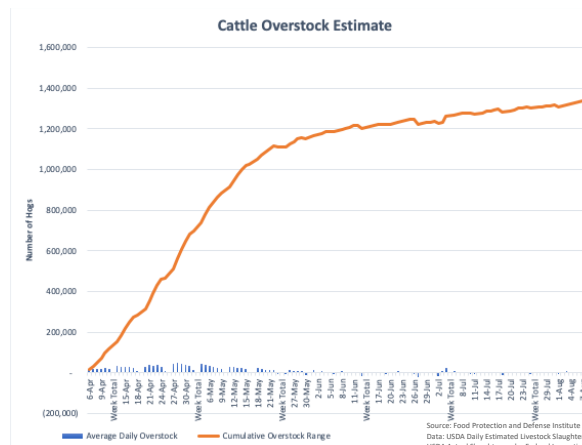
Cattle Update

Daily Cattle Slaughter and Overstock Addition

- Total overstock estimates – 1.3MM, uncertainty range 0.8M to 1.8MM – similar to previous week (USDA Daily Estimated Livestock Slaughter; USDA Actual Slaughter under Federal Inspection)
- Daily slaughter numbers

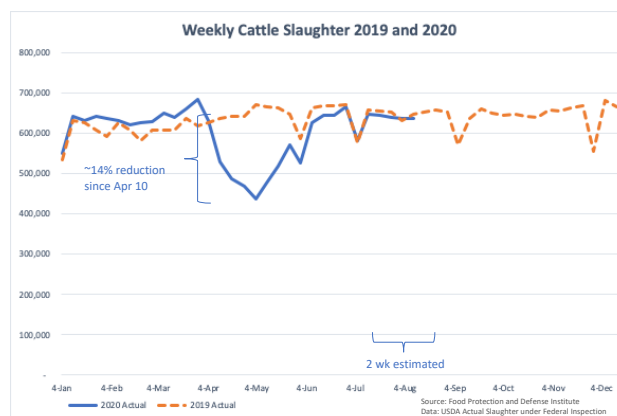
	Daily Estimate	Same day Wk Apr 4	Year Ago
August 3	113,000	118,756	120,391
August 4	119,000	119,473	120,706
August 5	117,000	117,235	119,819
August 6	118,000	115,152	122,132
August 7	109,000	107,188	117,102
August 8	60,000	53,495	46,553

(USDA Daily Estimated Livestock Slaughter; USDA Actual Slaughter under Federal Inspection)



Weekly Cattle Slaughter and Overstock Projections

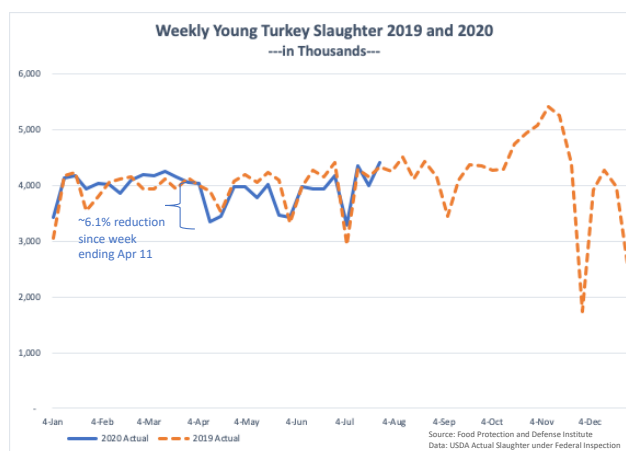
- Weekly slaughter numbers for the week ending August 8 were near normal capacity with a 14% reduction to date starting from the week ending April 4. (USDA Daily Estimated Livestock Slaughter; USDA Actual Slaughter under Federal Inspection)
- Cattle slaughter has been steady for several weeks at near 2019 levels indicating little flexibility in increasing capacity to manage overstock. Thus, it is likely that overstock will gradually diminish as calf placements are throttled.



Poultry Update

Weekly Poultry Slaughter and Overstock

- Young Turkeys
 - Young turkey weekly slaughter numbers for the week ending August 2 were slightly lower on capacity with a 6% reduction to date starting from the week ending April 4. (USDA Actual Slaughter under Federal Inspection)
- Broilers

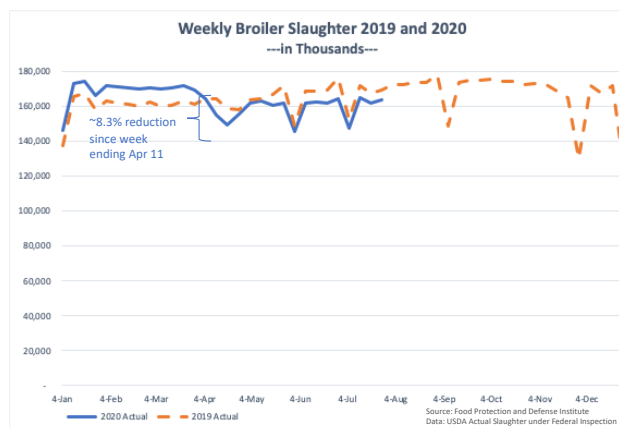




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- Broiler slaughter numbers for the week ending August 2 were down approximately 8% from normal capacity an 8% reduction to date starting from the week ending April 4. (USDA Actual Slaughter under Federal Inspection)
- Broiler slaughter is showing stabilization at capacity about 8% under 2019 capacity. With the length of the production cycle for broilers, consistency of production capacity for the past 2 months suggests a new equilibrium has been achieved.



Livestock Media Update

Webinars

- -

Processing facilities media coverage

(This section contains exemplary material from multiple perspectives around the issue.)

- [Smithfield Foods used a newspaper ad to attack the media. Here's how it's done—and why—in 12 tweets.](#) – The Counter, August 4, 2020
- [Hypocritical food ad of the week: Smithfield complains about its critics](#) – Food Politics, August, 5, 2020
- [Consumer groups challenge “deceptive” Tyson ads that brag about worker safety](#) – The Counter, July 30, 2020
 - [Re: Complaint requesting action to enjoin the dissemination of false or deceptive advertising by Tyson Foods, Inc., in re: labor practices](#) – Richman Law Group, July 30, 2020
- [UFCW urges Maple Leaf to shut down pork plant after four positive COVID-19 cases](#) – Meat+Poultry, August 7, 2020
- [Production at Irish pork plant halts as over 80 workers test positive for COVID-19](#) – The Pig Site, August 7, 2020
- [Over 10,000 Tyson Employees Have Tested Positive for COVID-19](#) – Food&Wine, July 31, 2020
- [Poultry Plants Allowed To Operate Faster Amid COVID-19 Outbreaks Among Workers](#) – WKU NPR, August 6, 2020
- [Mapping Covid-19 outbreaks in the food system](#) – Food & Environment Reporting Network
 - “According to data collected by FERN, as of August 7 at 12pm ET, at least **719** meatpacking and food processing plants (462 meatpacking and 257 food processing) and **93** farms and production facilities have had confirmed cases of Covid-19. At least



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54,036 workers (39,905 meatpacking workers, 8,343 food processing workers, and 5,788 farmworkers) have tested positive for Covid-19 and at least **232** workers (184 meatpacking workers, 34 food processing workers, and 14 farmworkers) have died.”
(Context: **Week over week change indicate a significant increase in food processing worker confirmed cases (150% of previous week) and farm facilities with confirmed cases (118% of previous week) with deaths from Covid-19 in these sectors increasing by 240% and 175%, respectively. This indicates more significant disruption in these sectors may be approaching. Farms on both coasts seem to be more affected than those in the Midwest with food processing impacts spread throughout the country.**)

Producer media coverage

(This section contains exemplary media coverage from multiple perspectives around the issue.)

- [Minnesota pork producer Christensen Farms gets most aid in Iowa hog disposal program](#) – WUSA, July 31, 2020
- [He fled Congo to work in a U.S. meat plant. Then he – and hundreds of his co-workers – got the coronavirus.](#) – Washington Post, August 6, 2020

Economic media coverage

(This section contains exemplary media coverage from multiple perspectives around the issue.)

- [China corn video stokes food security fears amid coronavirus pandemic, flooding and drought](#) – South China Morning Post, August 3, 2020
- [COVID-19 Disruptions in the U.S. Meat Supply Chain](#) – Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, July 31, 2020
- [USMEF: June pork, beef exports slide due to COVID-19](#) – Meat+Poultry, August 7, 2020
- [World's Top Pork Producer Goes on Defensive Over Virus Response](#) – Bloomberg Law, August 3, 2020
- [Proposed COVID-19 package covers depopulated livestock and poultry](#) – National Hog Farmer, July 31, 2020
- [The coronavirus pandemic has led to a spate of worker deaths, at least 5 major lawsuits, and federal scrutiny against meat processing giants in the United States](#) – Business Insider, August 3, 2020
- [Tyson Foods wants China to lift ban on U.S. plant with COVID-19 cases](#) – Reuters, August 3, 2020

Food shortage media coverage

(This section contains exemplary media coverage from multiple perspectives around the issue. At present, there are no indications of wide-scale food shortages although supply chain disruptions continue to create spot limited supply or out of stock situations.)

- [Coronavirus restrictions on food processing in Victoria won't lead to shortages, says Premier Daniel Andrews](#) – ABC Australia, August 6, 2020



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- [Meat Output Curbs in Australia Could Spur Near-Term Shortages](#) – Bloomberg, August 5, 2020
- [Clorox won't have enough disinfecting wipes until 2021, its CEO says](#) – Reuters, August 4, 2020 (Context: article describes shortages in raw materials, especially polyester spun lace – ““That entire supply chain is stressed. ... We feel like it’s probably going to take until 2021 before we’re able to meet all the demand that we have,” Dorer said.”)
- [These unknown brands took over store shelves while Purell and Clorox disappeared](#) – CNN, August 5, 2020 (Context: broader supply chain disruptions discussed related to packaging that also impact the food system)
- [8 Grocery Items That May Soon Be in Short Supply Again](#) – Eat This Not That – August 4, 2020
- [COVID-19 Meat Shortage Is Disrupting BBQ Joints Across America](#) – RFDTV, August 4, 2020

Recommendations from authoritative bodies (cumulative)

- [NEW Meat and Poultry Processing Facility Assessment Toolkit](#) - CDC
- [Protecting Seafood Processing Workers from COVID-19](#) - CDC
- [Daily Life and Coping](#) – CDC
- [Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security and Nutrition](#) – United Nations
- [COVID-19 Federal Rural Resource Guide](#) - USDA
- Opening Facilities
 - [Meat and Poultry Processing Workers and Employers](#) – CDC
 - [Meat and Poultry Processing Facility Assessment Toolkit](#) – CDC
 - [Agriculture Workers and Employers](#) – CDC and US Dept of Labor
 - [Agricultural Employer Checklist for Creating a COVID-19 Assessment and Control Plan](#)
 - [Guidance for workers and employers](#) – OSHA (many documents available)
 - [COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for the Meatpacking Industry](#) – Minnesota Department of Health
 - [Reporting a Temporary Closure or Significantly Reduced Production by a Human Food Establishment and Requesting FDA Assistance During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#) - FDA
 - [CDC updates COVID-19 transmission webpage to clarify information about types of spread](#) - CDC
 - [Food and Agriculture: Considerations for Prioritization of PPE, Cloth Face Coverings, Disinfectants, and Sanitation Supplies During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) - FDA
 - [COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions](#) – OSHA (Context – cloth face coverings)
 - [Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#) – CDC
 - [FAQs regarding the use of masks in the workplace](#) – OSHA
 - [Strategies to reduce COVID-19 transmission at Smithfield Foods Sioux Falls Pork Plant](#) - CDC
 - [Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities](#) - CDC
 - [Exercise Starter Kit for Workshop on Reconstituting Operations](#) – FEMA
 - [North American Meat Institute Coronavirus Update](#) – NAMI



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- [Testing Strategy for Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in High-Density Critical Infrastructure Workplaces after a COVID-19 Case Is Identified](#) - CDC
- Depopulation and Disposal
 - [APHIS Livestock Coordination Center](#) – USDA
 - [Recommendations for Swine Depopulation](#) (updated) – American Association of Swine Veterinarians
 - [Evaluating Emergency Euthanasia or Depopulation of Livestock and Poultry](#)
 - [Emergency Animal Mortality Management – Swine](#) – USDA
 - [USDA Carcass Management Dashboard](#) – USDA
- COVID from Food and Food Packaging
 - [How COVID-19 Spreads](#) – CDC (updated May 20, 2020)
 - [Best Practices for Retail Food Stores, Restaurants, and Food Pick-Up/Delivery Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) – FDA
 - [Best Practices for Re-Opening Retail Food Establishments During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) – FDA
 - [Safe Food Handling](#) - FDA
 - [Food Product FAQs](#) - FDA
 - [Food Safety and the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) – FDA
 - [What to Do if You Have COVID-19 Confirmed Positive or Exposed Workers in Your Food Production, Storage, or Distribution Operations Regulated by FDA](#) – FDA

Previous updates available upon request